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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/069,017	05/14/2002	Christophe Mathieu	Q68461	4517
23373	7590	02/07/2006		EXAMINER
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037			TRAN, DZUNG D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2638	

DATE MAILED: 02/07/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

OK

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/069,017	MATTHEW ET AL	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Dzung D. Tran	2633	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 November 2005.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 13-26 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 13 and 21-26 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 14-20 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 21-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 21 contains limitations for a submarine fiber optic transmission network and limitations for a method for use in a submarine fiber optic transmission network. Claim which is intended to embrace both apparatus and method is precluded by language of 35 U.S.C. 101, which set forth statutory classes of invention in alternative only, and is also invalid under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, since claim which purports to be both apparatus and method is ambiguous and therefore does not particularly point out and distinctly claim subject matter of the invention. See *Ex parte Lyell*, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (Bd.PA&I. 1990).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto et al. U.S. Patent no. 5,838,477.

Regarding claim 13, Yamamoto discloses in the background of the invention a submarine fiber optic transmission network including a single cable (col. 1, lines 6-7) with at least two pairs of fibers (see figure 13, for example, pair of fibers output from optical switch 6 and pair of fibers input to optical switch 7 at terminal B);

a branching unit 8 (see figures 12 and 13), the branching unit 8 of figure 12 being connected to terminal equipments (e.g., first submarine landing terminal equipment A, second submarine landing terminal equipment B, third submarine landing terminal equipment C of figure 12) by two cable sections (section branching to terminal B and section branching to terminal C) each having at least two pairs of fibers (section branching to terminal C having fiber pairs connected to optical couplers 5,9 and 7,6 and section branching to terminal B having fiber pairs connected to optical switch 6,7 and 6,7), each branching unit (see figure 13) switching the fiber pairs of the single cable to two fiber pairs of two cable sections connected to it (for example, fiber that input to optical splitter 5 at station A is branching to optical switch 6 of station B and station C, likewise, fiber that input to optical switch 7 at station B is branching to optical coupler 9 of station B and station C, etc...) and branching unit providing protection mechanism by enabling switching of the fiber pairs of the single submarine cable to the fiber pairs of one of the two cable sections connected to the said branching unit (Figure 12; col. 1, lines 4-10, col. 2, lines 26-34).

5. Claims 14-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dzung D Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-3025. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jason Chan can be reached on (571) 272-3022. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Dzung Tran
01/27/2006